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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

JCSM-687-67

9 December 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Military Operating Authorities During
Holiday Standdowns for Christmas 1967 and
New Year's and Tet 1968 (U)

1. (U) Reference is made to:

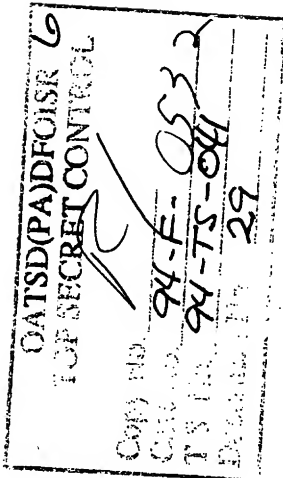
a. American Embassy, Saigon, message to State, 11714/221700Z November 1967, JCS IN 32691, in which Ambassador Locke presented the GVN position for holiday standdown periods of 36-36-72 hours and recommended that, if acceptable from a military standpoint, the proposal be accepted.

b. Joint State/Defense message to American Embassy, Saigon, 74877, 260205Z November 1967, JCS IN 38981, in which the Secretaries of State and Defense desired to limit standdown periods to 24-24-48 hours and provided guidance for the Ambassador in his negotiations with the Government of Vietnam and the Seven-Nation Ambassadors.

c. JCSM-567-67, dated 23 October 1967, subject: "Holiday Standdowns in Vietnam (U)," in which the Joint Chiefs of Staff opposed any holiday standdowns and further opposed a total freeze on logistics, force repositioning, and rotation and replacement of personnel.

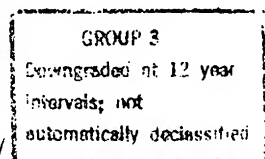
d. JCS message to CINCPAC and CINCSAC, 3879/281441Z April 1967, which provided the military instructions to be followed during the standdown for Buddha's birthday on 23 May 1967.

2. (U) The Joint Chiefs of Staff note that the Government has made a decision to institute standdowns of military activity of 24 hours at Christmas and New Year's and 48 hours at Tet.



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Declassified by Joint Staff
Date 31 Oct 94
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In the past, the enemy has demonstrated to our detriment his ability to capitalize on military standdowns; therefore, the rules of engagement promulgated last year should be modified in accordance with the draft message contained in the Appendix hereto.

3. (U) The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend your approval of the attached draft message.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:



HAROLD K. JOHNSON
Acting Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff

Attachment

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APPENDIX

DRAFT

IMMEDIATE
PRIORITY

FROM: JCS

TO: CINCPAC
CINCSAC

INFO: COMUSMACV
AMEMB SAIGON
AMEMB VIENTIANE
AMEMB BANGKOK
WHITE HOUSE
STATE DEPT

DISTRIBUTION:

CJCS DIA
DJS J-3
SJCS J-4
CSA J-5
CNO
CSAF
CMC
SECDEF
DEPSECDEF
ASD/ISA
ASD/PA

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JCS send.

Subj: Military Operating Authorities During Holiday
Standdown for Christmas 1967 and New Year's and
Tet 1968 (U)

1. (1) Following instructions will govern military operations in SEA during any agreed upon holiday standdown for Christmas 1967 and New Year's and Tet 1968. Exact dates and times will be promulgated when firm.
 - a. In SVN
 - (1) Initiate no military offensive operations except in response to:
 - (a) Enemy initiatives endangering the safety of US/RVN/PWMA forces.
 - (b) Significant enemy resupply or infiltration into the southern part of the DMZ and the area immediately south thereof.
 - (c) Major enemy resupply activities other than in subpara 1a(1)(b), above, which fulfill any of the following criteria:

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1. Are in such proximity to friendly units 1
and/or installations as to constitute a direct 2
threat to friendly forces. 3

2. Are taking place in a well-known established 4
enemy base area. 5

3. In other locations, involve supplies in 6
quantities sufficient to indicate major resupply 7
operations. 8

(2) CINCPAC is authorized to react to the above 9
enemy actions in accordance with his existing 10
authorities. Report actions taken under this 11
authority immediately to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 12

(3) Assume full alert posture and continue all 13
security precautions, to include patrol activity. 14
Be prepared with ready reaction forces to 15
respond to any VC/NVA initiative. 16

(4) Forces in contact with VC/NVA forces will 17
not break contact unless VC/NVA effort to withdraw 18
is clearly evident or until the operation concerned 19
is otherwise concluded. 20

(5) Continue MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN. 21

(6) Conduct intensified aerial reconnaissance 22
throughout period, and continue search and rescue 23
operations as required. 24

(7) If deemed necessary for security of 25
US/RVN/PWMA forces, appropriate air and/or naval 26
operations are authorized in support of the above 27
operations. For this purpose, ARC LIGHT may be 28
requested through normal channels. 29

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(8) Operations conducted pursuant to foregoing will 1
avoid, whenever possible, hamlets and villages in order 2
to minimize impact on civilian population. 3

b. In NVN 4

(1) Suspend normal armed reconnaissance, air strikes, 5
and SEA DRAGON operations during period. 6

(2) South of 20°N latitude, CINCPAC may authorize 7
SEA DRAGON operations, air strikes, and artillery fire 8
against observed substantial military resupply and 9
against any activities that pose a direct threat to 10
friendly forces. SEA DRAGON ships will not deliver 11
fire against fixed shore targets except in self- 12
defense. 13

(3) North of 20°N latitude, CINCPAC may authorize 14
air strikes against any targets that pose an immediate 15
and direct threat to our forces, such as movement of 16
SAMs to extend additional SAM defenses south of 20°N 17
latitude. 18

(4) Conduct intensified aerial reconnaissance and 19
continue search and rescue operations as required. 20

(5) High-priority FRANTIC GOAT operations may be 21
conducted at discretion of CINCPAC. 22

(6) Report immediately to the Joint Chiefs of Staff 23
results of any reconnaissance which discloses substantial 24
military resupply activity in NVN and any actions taken 25
under the authorities of subparagraph 1b(2) or (3) above. 26

2. ~~(b)~~ Continue normal operations in Laos and Cambodia. 27

3. ~~(c)~~ US commanders, for the safety of their forces, have 28
full authority to act to protect them, including reinstitution 29
as necessary of any military actions suspended by these 30
instructions. 31

4. ~~(d)~~ Report fully and immediately on VC/NVA hostile 32
acts during period. 33

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5. (C) Resume all normal operations at conclusion of each 1
period. 2

6. (C) Be prepared to resume all normal operations at any 3
time, without delay, during the standdown period, should enemy 4
initiated attacks and/or incidents reach such proportions as 5
to cause the RVN, United States, and their allies to terminate 6
the standdown for cause. 7

7. (C) Coordinate any public comment relating to these 8
instructions with US Ambassador, Saigon. GP-3 9

WRITER:

Captain W. L. Spann, USN
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Extension 57008

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